Role of Panchayati Raj System in Rural Development: A Case study of Mathura District of Uttar Pradesh

A Synopsis

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Introduction

Uttar Pradesh has 71 districts 820 development Blocks, 107452 villages, 51976 Gram Panchayats and 8135 Nyay Panchayats. There are 1.4 million people who live in India out of it Uttar Pradesh's population is 199581477 Crore. Uttar Pradesh is the first state in India who has most population on India. An attempt is made to study the role of gram Panchayats in rural development in general and village's in Mathura district is rural area. Panchayati Raj is a three-tier system of administration for the development of rural areas, with the Gram Panchayat at the village level, JanpadPanchayat at the block level and ZilaParishad at the district level. It has been introduced to provide a bold and imaginative leadership for all round development of the village community. **(Jain, S.P. 1999)** As the economic uplift of the community cannot be entrusted to any other organization than the one represented by the village people themselves, the role of the Panchayati Raj institution in the rebuilding of rural India becomes inevitably important. Mathura is a city in the NorthIndianstate of Uttar Pradesh. The Panchayats play vital role in rural development in India, particularly after independence**.(Mishra 2011)** Plan documents of both the central and state governments and various committees have emphasized the importance of these bodies in the polity. Five-year plans, specially the second five-year plan, laid special emphasis on the role of Panchayats in rural developments. The paper contains need and importance of the study, methodology, objectives of the study, hypothesis, general observations, evolutions of Panchayat raj, development programmes in Mathura gram Panchayati, etc. An attempt is made to study the role of gram Panchayats in rural development in general and Mathura district (Uttar Pradesh) in particular.

Meaning of Rural Development

The term 'Rural Development' is of focal interest and is widely acclaimed in both the developed and the developing countries of the world. There is however no universally acceptable definition of rural development and the term is used in different ways and in vastly divergent contexts. As concept, it connotes over all development of rural areas with a view to improve the quality of life of rural people. In this sense, it is a comprehensive and multi dimensional concept and encompasses the development of agriculture and allied activities - village and cottage industries and crafts, socio-economic infrastructure, community services and facilities, and above all, the human resource in rural areas. As a

phenomenon, it is the result of interactions between various physical, technological, economic, socio-cultural, and institutional factors. As a strategy, it is designed to improve the economic and social well being of a special group of people of the rural poor.

Rural Development in India is one of the most important factors for the growth of the Indian economy. India is primarily an agriculture-based country. Agriculture contributes nearly one-fifth of the gross domestic product in India. In order to increase the growth of agriculture, the Government has planned several programs pertaining to Rural Development in India. There are 1.4 million people who live in india out of it Uttar Pradesh's population is 199581477 crore.Uttar Pradesh is the first state in india who has most population on india. An attempt is made to study the role of gram Panchayats in rural development in general and village's in Mathura district is rural area .

Meaning of Panchayati Raj System

Block Panchayats have been the backbone of the Indian villages since the beginning of recorded history. Gandhi ji, the father of the nation, in 1946 had aptly remarked that the Indian Independence must begin at the bottom and every village ought to be a Republic or Panchayat having powers. Gandhiji's dream has been translated into reality with the introduction of the three-tier Panchayati Raj system to ensure people's participation in rural reconstruction. Panchayati Raj is a three-tier system of administration for the development of rural areas, with the Gram Panchayat at the village level, the Panchayat Samiti at the block level and Zila Parishad at the district level. It has been introduced to provide a bold and imaginative leadership for all round development of the village community. As the economic uplift of the community cannot be entrusted to any other organization than the one represented by the village people themselves, the role of the Panchayati Raj institution in the rebuilding of rural India becomes inevitably important.

The Panchayati Raj Movement was launched in the State on 2 October 1961. Panchayati or Panchayati raj is a system of governance in which gram Panchayats are the basic units of administration. It has 3 levels: villages and district level. The number of Panches and the mode of election of Sarpanch of a Panchayat has been has been changing from time to time. In 1960, a gram sabha could elect 5 to 9 panches was raised from 5 to 11, but the mode of election of sarpanch was made indirect, i.e. the panches of the Panchayat were to elect the sarpanch from amongst themselves. In 1972, election of the Sarpanch in addition of electing the panches, the number of panches remaining the same. The election of sarpanch was again

made indirect in 1978 with no change as to the number of panches. From 1982, the election of sarpanch has again been made direct without altering the total number of panches. This number could go up to thirteen in a Panchayat which filed to elect two women panches. (**Surat Singh1993)** They would be co-opted in that case Panchayat comes from panch, 'five,' but the body so called is not limited to this number. Many castes in towns and villages have also their own Panchayats, which deal with business, social, and religious matters common to the caste**" (Royal Commission 1909, p 236)**

Role of the Panchayati Raj System in Rural Development

The Panchayats are expected to play an important role in rural development in India, particularly after independence. Five-year plans, specially the second five-year plan, laid special emphasis on the role of Panchayats in rural developments. Second five-year plan envisaged a Panchayati as responsible for village development keeping transformation of social and economic life of rural areas as its goal of development. **(Planning Commission 2007-2012)** The role of Panchayat Raj institutions as instruments of rural reconstruction and development needs no emphasis. They have been reorganized with wider powers and financial resources not merely as institutions of political participation but institutions of social and economic development. Panchayat Raj has come to be associated with two broad images. First, it is a government by itself and second it is an agency of the state government. In the integrated exercise of planning for social and economic development, co-ordinate roles, the present set up is a three-tier representative structure of government where the administrators, elected leaders and local population participate in the developmental effort.

Plans of Panchayati Raj System in Uttar Pradesh

- Clean India Mission (Rural) in Uttar Pradesh
- Rajiv Gandhi Panchayat Empowerment Campaign (RGPSA)
- Panchayat Empowerment Award (PSP)
- State Finance Commission (SFC)
- Backward Region Grant Fund (BRGF)
- Uttar Pradesh Lohia Gramin Awas yojna 2015 UP Government Housing Scheme
- BetiBachaoBetiPdaoAbhiyan (B.B.B.A) in uttar pradesh
- Number of Gram Panchayats (GPs) Planned to be Made Mathura in Uttar Pradesh (2012-2017)

Objectives

- To analyse the role of Panchayati Raj System in rural development in Mathura district.
- To study the rural development activities in Mathura district.
- To identify problems of implementing rural development programmes in Mathura district.
- To study the performance of Panchayati Raj System in rural development in Mathura district.

Review of Literature

Baijnath,Singh (1959) studied summarily the effects of the rural leadership on the Community development programmes of Uttar-Pradesh in ETAWAH district. He clarifies that the community development programmes have raised a new young leadership, which is from the middle class sections of the society. This leadership group has injected new values and hopes in the rural areas.

The Balwant Ray Mehta Committee (1957) was appointed to examine the extent to which Community Development Programmes had succeeded in utilizing local initiatives. The Committee observed that Community Development Programmes (CDP) had failed to evoke popular initiative that the local bodies at the level higher than the Panchayat had evinced only little enthusiasm in it. The team came out to the conclusion that so long as we do not create a representative and democratic institution to take care of local needs and resources, we will never be able to evoke local interest, and ignite local initiative in the field of development. The Committee, therefore, made the recommendation to introduce a three-tier system of rural self- government- Grama Panchayat, Block Panchayat and Zilla Panchayat for the effective implementation of development programmes.

Haricharan (1983) Discuss the role of Panchayati raj institution in rural development. The study was attempt by making a detail analysis of the income, expenditure and physical achievements of village Panchayati raj institutions con become instrument of rural development only if they are provided with adequate resources.

Ashok Mehta Committee (1978) has clearly visualized that „development devoid of popular participation" is on a weak foundation. It has clearly seen that in order to be self-sustaining and self-generating, development has to go hand in hand with participation. It has advocated that rural development and rural welfare are possible only with local initiatives and local directions. In the ultimate analysis, it must be an instrument of expression of local people's will in regard to local development.

A.K. Pandey (1990) has made an attempt at the conceptual and operational problems of an alternative development strategy, with particular focus on people‟s participation and local level planning.

John and Jose (1999) examined the relationship between Gram sabha and Panchayat. They stated that the workable relation between these two is yet to emerge in most of the states and revealed that an effective Gram Sabha is possible only with the willing cooperation of the representatives of the people after the Panchayat has been invested with sufficient powers.

Aziz (1992) in his study on 'Decentralization: Mandal Panchayat System in Karnataka', stated that the Gram Sabha meetings were held somewhat regularly in the first year and, in due course, the frequency of meetings and the number of villages where meetings were held, declined and attendance also was not encouraging.

Galab, S. (1993) examined the functioning of Rural Employment Programmes in Anantapur district, a drought-prone and backward one in Andhra Pradesh. According to the guidelines the community works should be executed by the local village agencies such as village Panchayats, parental/school committees and village development council that would ensure the full benefits of wages to the local workers and the quality of assets. This study revealed exploitation of labour by the professional contractors and the problems faced by the first generation contractors. It recommended that the inclusion of NGOs in the implementation of the programmes would ensure the flow of benefits to the deserving target groups in full; simultaneously, the process would motivate, organize and strengthen the grassroots level machinery. All the possible and required materials for the programmes could be manufactured with the total participation and coordination of the beneficiaries.

Palanithurai *et.al.* (1997) Analyse various dimensions of Panchayati raj in the backdrop of Tamil Nadu. Structural imperatives required for Panchayati raj, nonconventional resource , agricultural development in the Panchayati raj, preparation of development plan at the panchayat level, etc constitute the sub themes of discussion by the Authors.

Moonis (1988) in this book present that many people still think first of economist growth’ in relation to poverty reduction, indeed, their correlation in one of the most discussed issues

of combating poverty. The relationship is of great importance because if there is a clear causal dependency, reducing poverty could fundamentally be limited to measures to promote growth. However, if there was low growth or stagnation it would not be possible to reduce poverty decisively. Hardly anyone now explicitly express the view that economic development tricks downs automatically to the poor practical experience has refuted this assumption dating from the early day of development policy in the 1960 s. however a number of studies show development of growth and a decline in poverty running parallel on the other hand, there are also example which show that despite high economic growth, poverty is not reduced markedly.

Bidyut, Mohanty's (2000) Recent study on the impact of 73rd Amendment in Orissa through field experience analyses that about 80-90% of women attend the Panchayat meetings regularly. Given the seen number, one might conclude that the democracy has become participatory than before at least at the grassroot level. In the study of taking interview of elected women leaders from Orissa, he observed that the socioeconomic background of these women showed that majority of them come from the lower income group particularly at the village Panchayat level.

Joshi (2000) Discusses the role Panchayati raj institution in the alleviation of rural poverty. The study has been presented with reference to some Panchayats in Madhya Pradesh The empirical analysis infers that good number of people are regularly theeping away from the gram sabha and that on many occasion the meetings of gram sabha have become a mere formality. The study also infers that the functionaries at the grass root level have inadequate knowledge of the rule and procedure of various transactions and that physical capacities to undertake development plan are very poor. The author, therefore, suggests to make the working of Panchayati raj institutions more methodical, more pragmic and scientific.

Ghosh (2005) has cited the role of the Panchayat in ensuring livelihood security of the rural poor even if they do not receive much assistance from the state government in the form of powers and resources. He suggested ways and means through which these institutions can be very useful to rural people including poor.He concluded that introduction of local level planning through the agency of Panchayat will be a major step in empowering these bodies which is a necessary condition for making interventions for rural poverty reduction effective.

Alok (2011) Studied the Role of Panchayat Bodies in Rural Development since 1959. The rural local government in India is called the Panchayat, which literally means an assembly of five persons. These five elderly, nominated persons, over the course of time, were vested with sacred authority and with judicial and executive powers. These village three communities were the centers of administration and the custodians of social harmony. Evidence suggests that self-governing village communities have always existed in India. Their roots can be traced in the *Rig Veda*4 as dating back to approximately 1200 BC. Panchayat in present India has inherited though little from those native local institutions of Indian society which was predominantly rural in character in the mediaeval period. Urban communities came up due to political or religious factors. The headquarters of governments, 2"Panchayat comes from panch, 'five,' but the body so called is not limited to this number. Many castes in towns and villages have also their own Panchayats, which deal with business, social, and religious matters common to the caste" (Royal Commission 1909, p 236).

Hypothesis

The study seeks to test the following hypothesis. "Panchayati Raj institution is playing key role in rural development and enriching the positions of the rural people and rural areas.

METHODOLOGY

In the light of objective and the hypothesis of the study, a systematic research design is drawn. The relevant data for the study was collected through primary and secondary sources. Research tools such as interview schedule and participant observation was used. The Secondary sources comprised of official records of Gram Panchayati Mathura. Separate questionnaires were used for collection of information from Gram Panchayati members, and rural poor people, Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe people who have taken assistance and other benefits under the jurisdiction of gram Panchayati. The data is also collected through the interview.

Method of Collecting Data

Primary Data: Data will be collected through questionnaire method. Survey will be conducted in two phases:

- On Gram Panchayat in Mathura district.
- On rural people of Mathura.
- Respondents would be interviewed at their respective residences. A questionnaire would be prepared comprising questions on various aspects dealing with their social, economic, political and educational conditions.

Secondary Data: Secondary data will be collected using Journals Magazines, National and International Publications.

Method of collecting secondary data:

- Literature review.
- Web search.
- Various journals, survey
- Through internet.

Sample size: 3 blocks in Mathura district

Area of research: Mathura district of Uttar Pradesh

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